

**Testimony to the Human Services Committee Regarding
An Act Concerning Expansion of HUSKY Health Benefits to Those Ineligible Due to
Immigration Status
February 14, 2023**

Senator Lesser, Representative Gilcrest, Senator Seminara, Representative Case, and honorable members of the Human Services Committee. My name is Kathleen Milazzo Swahn and I am a resident of Glastonbury. I am also writing as a member of Glastonbury First Church of Christ, Congregational's Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA) Team.

I want to offer my STRONG SUPPORT for House Bill 6616: *An Act Concerning Expansion of HUSKY Health Benefits to Those Ineligible Due to Immigration Status*

To start, I would like to thank the members of the State Legislature for your actions in recent sessions to expand HUSKY coverage to income and program eligible undocumented children up to the age of 12 and to undocumented pregnant people. HB 6616 would take the needed step of extending this eligibility to older children and young adults up to age 26 (the age we are all familiar with under the Affordable Care Act).

This Act recognizes, as do a majority of Connecticut's residents, that we shouldn't be denying access to health care, including mental health care, that can save the lives and enhance the health and well-being of our undocumented neighbors. This includes coverage that will enable care for the mental health crisis confronting so many of our young people.

Expanding access to HUSKY coverage will also reduce the often too late and costly emergency room services sought by those uninsured when physical and mental health care issues reach a crisis stage. This bill will address these inefficiencies and will improve health outcomes.

Thank you for your consideration of my views in this regard.

Kathleen

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